

SUMTER COUNTY



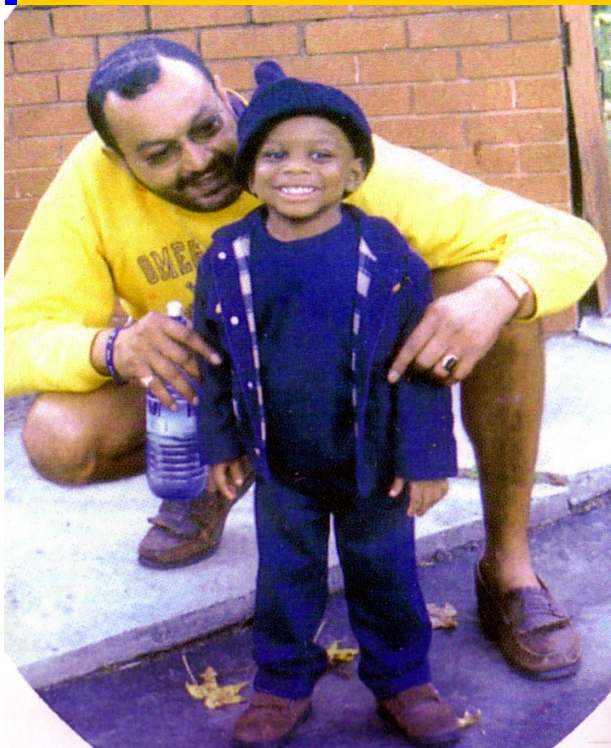
Getting children ready for school.

Parents as Teachers

Childcare Training

Childcare ABC/Scholarship

Dolly Parton's Imagination Library



ANNUAL REPORT 2016

Our Vision

*Reaching every child possible to improve
school readiness in South Carolina*

In Sumter County, it's all about the
Children, their Parents and Childcare Providers.



ANNUAL REPORT

2016

WHO WE SERVE

First Steps serves South Carolina's young children, their families and childcare providers

Indicator	SC	Sumter County
Children Under Five	289,990	7,502
Children In Poverty	26.4%	32.7%
3 rd Graders Below Standard in Reading	21.1%	28.1%
Births to Mothers With Less Than a High School Diploma	15.7%	13.5%

COUNTY PROGRAMS

Parents As teachers
Imagination Library
Childcare Training
Childcare ABC/Scholarships

STATE PROGRAMS

Babynet
First steps 4-K

OUR RESULTS

Over 350+ children impacted through Parents As teachers; Childcare Scholarships; Dolly Parton Imagination Library and Childcare Training for Childcare Providers

Over 85 childcare providers/directors have benefited from our childcare training program. The number of children in their care, which have been impacted from our training.

SCHOOL READINESS BY INCREASING THE

Since the inception of South Carolina First Steps in 1999, the importance and awareness of school readiness has increased in our state. Early educators with varying terminology define school readiness as children ready for school. First Steps defines school readiness as children prepared and ready for school success. The Office of Head Start defines school readiness as "children possessing the skills, knowledge, and attitudes necessary for success in school and for later learning and life." Regardless of the terminology it entails setting measurable goals with evidence-based strategies; planning and implementation; and assessment and evaluation.

Sumter County First Steps (SCFS) has concentrated on strategies that will increase the likeliness of children being prepared to successfully enter school ready to learn. This is being accomplished by focusing on strategies, which increase parenting skills and quality childcare.

SCFS is providing a home visitation program to help train parents on how to be their child's first and best teacher. We have chosen Parent As Teachers (PAT) as a strategy to assist with this goal. PAT is a national model, which is an evidence-based early childhood home visitation program. PAT will increase a parent's knowledge of child development and improves parenting practices.

SCFS is also providing childcare training to childcare providers and Scholarships/ABC Vouchers for quality childcare. Quality childcare is a research-based determinant of school readiness. When you think about the number of hours children are with child care providers, you can understand the importance of quality.

We also support our families with Dolly Parton Imagination Library to develop an environment, which has a love for reading. An age appropriate book is mailed to the child each month up until their 5th birthday. SCFS has established these strategies to improve school readiness in Sumter County. These strategies "will not change substantially from year to year. However, goals for individual children and families will likely change based on needs and progress revealed by ongoing data collection."

SCFS is appreciative for all of its community partners and other agencies involved in school readiness. Together, we are making a difference.

Julia A. Nelson, MPA
Executive Director



Healthy Start



Family Strengthening



Early Intervention



Quality Child Care



Early Education



School Transition

What We Do...

Each of the six color blocks of the First Steps logo represents a core area of service, outlining our comprehensive strategy to prepare children for long-term school success.

With **measurable outcomes across each of its six school readiness strategy areas**, First Steps is getting results.



Healthy Start

We begin with a focus on providing a healthy start to life. This includes prenatal and post-partum services for both mother and baby. In 2007, First Steps collaborated with key philanthropic and agency partners to bring Nurse-Family Partnership to SC having a significant impact on reducing premature births and Medicaid costs.



Quality Childcare

Quality childcare starts with quality childcare providers. Our quality enhancement and training strategies lead to improved teacher-student interaction, which research shows has a significant impact on a child's development and success in school.



Family Strengthening

Our home visitation strategies, such as Parents as Teachers, Parent-Child Home and Early Steps to School Success, are helping parents understand their responsibilities to care for and be positive models for their children. As a result of First Steps' intervention and parenting support, 66% of clients initially assessed at "low" levels of parenting have achieved moderate or high levels of parenting skill.



Early Education

Private-public partnerships through First Steps 4K have led to significant cost efficiencies in the delivery of publicly funded 4K. One recent analysis suggests First Steps is achieving comparable results, without the need for costly capital construction, for 80 cents on the dollar.



Early Intervention

According to recent federal evaluations, outcomes for clients participating in BabyNet early intervention programs are above national averages. BabyNet matches the special needs of infants and toddlers



School Transition

Each of the corresponding blocks of services leads ultimately to the goal of transitioning children successfully to school. Programs like Countdown to Kindergarten and From Day One to Grade One are ultimately preparing children for school success.

Based on the needs of our community, Sumter County First focuses its investments in family strengthening and quality childcare

Parents as Teachers & ABC Scholarships



Parents as Teachers

Parents play a critical role in their child's development.

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

Parents as Teachers (PAT) is an evidence-based home visiting program designed to build strong communities, thriving families and children who are healthy, safe and ready to succeed. PAT services include:

- **Personal Visits** at least twice monthly;
- **Monthly Group Connections** with other PAT families;
- **Screenings and Assessments** to identify developmental concerns; and
- **Connections to Outside Resources** that families may need to succeed.

Sumter County First Steps serves families in greatest need. Among our PAT families:

Our PAT program:

- Increases parent knowledge of child development and improves parenting practices
- Provides early detection of developmental delays and
- health issues
- Prevents child abuse and neglect
- Increases children's school readiness and school success

Sumter County First Steps serves families who most need and want our services. Among our PAT families:

33%..... Live in Poverty

13.8%.....Head of Household w/o High School Diploma

"I grew up as a foster child. I didn't have any good examples of what a good parenting looked like. Now, because of PAT, I have so much more to offer my children."

A former teary-eyed single parent

PAT by the Numbers 2015-2016

Families Served	52
Children Served	67
Total Home Visits	1555
# of hours in homes	2176
Scholarships/ABC Vouchers used for PAT Clients	13

The 13 children who received assistance with quality childcare were identified with 2 or more at risk factors, which may include developmental delays. Their parents work or attend school. Quality childcare is important to every child's development.

Thanks to Our Partners

Sumter School District

SC Dept. of Social Services ABC Program

Imagination Library



Children's reading scores improve dramatically when parents are involved in helping them learn to read.

Program Description

According to the Center on the Developing Child at Harvard University, the peak period for children developing neural connections related to language is around **nine months of age. One of the easiest and most effective ways to build the language neural connections in a young child's brain is to read to them.**

Sumter First Steps is the local sponsor of Dolly Parton Imagination Library, which provides free age-appropriate books to children age birth to 5 years. Operated by the Dollywood Foundation, Imagination Library is currently in more than 1,600 communities internationally and mails books to about 700,000 children each month.

Children who register with Sumter First Steps receive one book per month by mail through the month of their fifth birthday. All books are quality, age-appropriate books carefully selected for each age group by a committee of educational specialists.

A major benefit of the Imagination Library program is that it requires very little overhead or administrative obligation. Since the Dollywood Foundation in Tennessee administers the operation and book distribution, the cost to local communities is as low as \$25 per child per year.

Imagination Library by the Numbers, 2015-2016

Children Served	216
Books Given to Children 0-5	2270

**Note: Families that are new to the Imagination Library program are given information about the importance of reading to their children and strategies for making the most of their shared reading time.*

This year, our Imagination Library Program:

Provided one book per month to 216 children who were referred by parenting programs, Early Head Start, Head Start, DSS, DHEC, and other Community partners; and continued to receive financial support from The Sumter Community and Board Members which allowed us to serve considerably more children than we could have on our own.

Thanks to Our Partners

Dollywood Foundation
 Sumter County School District
 Child Find
 Early Head Start
 Head Start
 Tuomey Hospital
 Other Family Service Providers in Sumter

Sponsor

A

Child

For

\$25 per year

Child Care Training

Those who care for young children need high-quality, accessible, affordable professional development.

Program Description:

Efforts to improve the quality of child care must include providing affordable, high quality training that meets the needs of the local child care workforce.

First Steps-sponsored training is certified through the SC Center for Child Care Career Development and includes topics in the areas of nutrition, health and safety, curriculum, child guidance, professional development and program administration. Best practices in training include not only the training, but also follow-up with supported practice in the classroom.

Training by the Numbers, 2015-16

Total Training Attendance	201
Number of Training Sessions Offered	5
Number of Hours Offered	25
Number of Children Potentially Impacted	350+

This year, our training program provided:

- All trainers are master-level trainers with doctorate degrees in Education and have 30+ years of experience in Early Education.
- Incorporated take-home assignments into each session to allow participants to practice the concepts introduced during training sessions; and offered follow-up technical assistance visits for training

Thanks to Our Partners

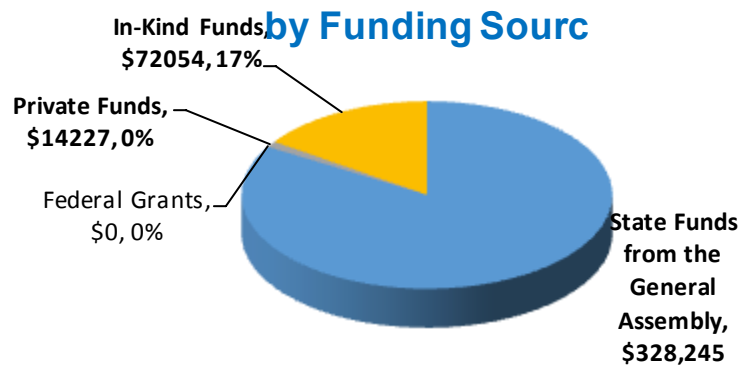
Sumter County Child Care Community

Earlene Walker-Kelly, Ed. D.

Anita Kieslich, Ed. D.

Financial Impact

Sumter County First Steps 2015-2016 Expenditures



Total 2015-16 Expenditures: \$392,531

State Funds Leverage in 2015-16*: 19.66%

*Percentage of state dollars matched by additional federal, private, and/or in-kind funds

2015-16 Expenditures by Strategy

	State \$	Federal \$	Private \$	In-Kind \$
Parents as Teachers	\$171,173	\$0		\$60,000
Imagination Library	\$2,167	\$0	\$2,167	
Child Care Training	\$24,947	\$0	\$1,209	\$362
Scholarships	\$58,017	\$0	\$0	\$0
Program Support	\$48,550	\$0	\$552	\$89
Administrative Support	\$23,188	\$0	\$110	\$0
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	\$328,042	\$0	\$4,038	\$60,451

Unaudited numbers for the period July 1, 2015—June 30, 2016

Community Leadership in Early Childhood

Partnering to make a positive difference in the lives of Sumter County's Children, Families and Childcare Providers...

Board Members 2015 — 2016

Name	Position	Board Category
Walter G. Newman	Board Chairperson	Legislative Delegation Appointee
Earlene Walker, Ed.D.	Board Vice Chairperson	Early childhood education
Michelle Parker	Board Secretary	Transportation
Artrell Brown	Board Treasurer	Head Start Appointee
Libby Dubose	Legislative Liaison	School District Appointee/Early Head Start
Toni Brew	Board Member	Family Service provider
Rev. Billy Bennett	Board Member	Faith Community
Harrison Brown	Board Member	Legislative Delegation Appointee
Austin Floyd	Board Member	Legislative Delegation Appointee
Diane Geter	Board Member	DSS Appointee
Harry Lash	Board Member	Faith Community
Jennifer Miles	Board Member	Early Childhood Education
Lana Odom	Board Member	Legislative Appointee
Wanda Ramsey	Board Member	Early Childhood Education
Cynthia Ransom	Board Member	Transportation provider
Ted Wilson	Board Member	Business Community

Contact Information for Sumter County First Steps

Mailing Address: POB 2331, Sumter, SC 29151
 Physical Address: 220 Hasel Street, Sumter, SC 29150
 Ph: 803.464.1224 Fax: 803.774.5620
 E-mail: sumterfirststeps@yahoo.com

Getting children ready for school.

The Goals of First Steps

- (1) **Provide parents with access to the support they might seek and want** to strengthen their families and to promote the optimal development of their preschool children;
- (2) **Increase comprehensive services** so children have reduced risk for major physical, developmental, and learning problems;
- (3) **Promote high-quality preschool programs** that provide a healthy environment that will promote normal growth and development;
- (4) **Provide services** so all children receive the protection, nutrition, and health care needed to thrive in the early years of life so they arrive at school ready to succeed; and
- (5) **Mobilize communities** to focus efforts on providing enhanced services to support families and their young children so as to enable every child to reach school healthy and ready to succeed.

-- Section 59-152-30



Interested parents can contact any participating 4K providers to complete an application. To view a list of participating First Steps 4K providers, visit:

<http://scfirststeps.org/4k>



BabyNet

South Carolina's Early Intervention System

BabyNet in Clarendon County:
LOCAL PHONE #: (843) 669-8689

<http://scfirststeps.org/babynet/>